ABSTRACT

An apparatus, system and method for converting data in a first packet format, having overhead data in the form of headers and/or trailer padding, into a second, variable-length packet format, in which some of the header and/or trailer overhead is removed during conversion in order to more efficiently utilize the limited bit rate capacity of a link which will convey the data in the second format. Embodiments include a communication subnetwork for interconnecting a plurality of users to a wide area network through a wireless link, an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) switch for converting ATM cells into a variable-length packet format, and a convergence system for converting ATM cells into data packets in Media Access Control (MAC) format.

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